



# DISINTERESTED STATESMEN

£1000.

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HEAD



OR

TAIL



THE LOVER



THE HUSBAND



PATERFAMILIAS



GRANDPA



## THEIR NOTIONS OF ECONOMY

HEADS AND TAILS  
IN  
THE CIVIL SERVICE.

BY  
A CIVIL SERVANT.

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EPIGRAM,

*By the Rt. Hon. R. LOWE, presumably composed in front of a mirror.*

“To govern men, O Roman! was thy care—  
To crush the mighty and the weak to spare;  
While Britain's sons a cheaper glory seek—  
To spare the mighty, and to crush the weak!”

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LONDON :

### NOTE.

The Author alone is reponsible for whatever appears on the following pages. There is nothing put forward as a matter of fact, except in perfect good faith, and a belief in its practical accuracy. If, through inadvertence or error, there should prove to be any exception to this rule, he would be much obliged to any one who would point it out, that it may be immediately rectified. He does not, however, at all anticipate that such a thing will happen, the circumstances alluded to being of common notoriety, and generally supported by authentic references.

The Author is strongly sensible to the injustice and wrong of circulating incorrect statements about, or misrepresenting public men, but he admits no obligation to protect them from the results of deeds and words for which they, in their sphere, as he in his, are, and alone are, responsible.

# HEADS AND TAILS IN THE CIVIL SERVICE.

"O, it is excellent  
To have a giant's strength ; but it is tyrannous  
To use it like a giant."

*Measure for Measure.*

WHEN the Liberal Government was formed in the year 1868, one of the numerous tasks which it set itself to accomplish was the reform of the Civil Service, with a view to the abolition of the evils of patronage, and the reduction of the national expenditure. The doing of this devolved, in chief, upon Mr. Robert Lowe, a politician of eminence as a scholar, and of conspicuous independence and individuality of character. He has the reputation of having been "a man of war from his youth," being gifted, apparently, with a natural fondness for making enemies ; and, although having been repeatedly obliged to confess to failure in dealing with public matters in the past, he has been not the less boastful of his success, and—"smelling the battle afar off"—defiant as to the future.

But that kind of disposition, while possible for a cypher or a unit in society, cannot prevail to more than a limited extent in Parliamentary and Ministerial life, where tact is wanted as well as toughness, and a deficiency of *suaviter in modo* is not compensated for by a double allowance of *fortiter in re*. Hence, it came to pass that when arrangements were being made for the new Ministry in the beginning of 1880, and a very few weeks after Mr. Lowe had informed the country what "we" were going to do if "we" were returned to office—"Put it down a *we*, my Lord," as Mr. Weller, Senr., said, "put it down a *we*!"—the country was further made acquainted with the fact that the right honourable gentleman was to be raised to the peerage—a raising to an elevated position and a wearing of a distinctive headgear, remarkably suggestive, under the circumstances, of two similar honours conferred in village schools upon small boys who have been misconducting themselves. The "most intellectual man of the day," as he

has been called, was therefore to be known in future, not by any such irreverent titles as "Lucifer Lowe," "Bicycle Bob," or "The Right Honourable the White Ferret," but, in accordance with his new dignity, as "The Right Honourable Viscount Sherbrooke."

Since the transmigration of his soul from the carnal atmosphere, or at least, associations, of the Lower House, to the more ethereal region above, the public have not heard so much either of or from him, as had been their wont; it may therefore be charitably supposed that the change has done him good, unless indeed the improvement had really taken place before, necessitating an alteration in his external habitation, and that the metamorphosis was not wholly dissimilar to that of one of whom it was briefly but tenderly said:

"Here lies poor Martha Gwynne,  
Who was so very pure within,  
That she broke the shell of her outer skin,  
And hatched herself a cherubim."

But, assuming that this was the case with Mr. Lowe, and that at the time that he broke the shell of his outer skin, and hatched himself, what may be described as a parliamentary cherubim, he had already attained to a degree of "purity within," not inferior to that of the above-mentioned lamented lady, he could have done so but at a very recent date; because it was only in the month of November previous that he acknowledged that he was "a hardened villain"—a statement, the accuracy of which it is believed, has never been denied or called in question—and that "he would retain anything he had done." There was, however, one thing at least that he had done which he did not desire to retain, for he had admitted as much several years before. Nevertheless, there was a special reason why he would not have retained it, a reason which will be mentioned in due course, and it does not affect his own personal willingness in the matter. It is in consequence of this that his name is here introduced, he having been the originator of the circumstances to the consideration of which this book is devoted, and he never having in any way revoked them, or except for the reason given, expressed any desire to do so, or any regret that he had recommended them.

That the evils of patronage, which, till he took the matter in hand, had disfigured the Civil Service, should be abolished, it was determined to throw the Service open to the public by means of competitive examination in certain branches of study; and this encouragement to education was what was to have been ex-



pected from one, who in his own person was so signal a success in scholarship, and who had likewise been successful in organizing an able system of education at the Antipodes. Such a mode of entering the public service was at the same time consistent with the numerous other plans in existence during the twenty or thirty years preceding and succeeding that period, for the same purpose of advancing the cause of education.

But, except with regard to the abolition of patronage, the Civil Service had not much to gain from the new method. It led to a process of cramming for a time, and to attain a given object, which was probably too much of a system in itself, to fairly represent a candidate's actual attainments; there was no practical purpose to be served by the acquirement of knowledge that would not afterwards be wanted; and in the non-continuance of the habit of study after the examination was once past, there was not any certainty that what had been learned, under a process of high-pressure, would be eventually remembered, and that the mind of the recipient of so much book-lore would not be analogous to that kettle of water from which the tea was made, and of which the servant-gal replied to her mistress's remonstrance about its temperature, "It have a-biled, mum."

With the view of carrying out the second purpose, viz., that of the reduction of the national expenditure, Mr. Lowe recommended the employment in Government offices of a second class of men, to be in subordination to the former class or regular staff, and whose duties, it was intended, should consist of simple matters, chiefly of a routine character. The word "men" has been used for convenience, but *men* could scarcely have been in Mr. Lowe's mind at the time, because his object was to dispense with all those characteristics of creatures belonging to the animal kingdom, in which for practical purposes, they are inferior to contrivances made from the mineral kingdom, and only to fall back upon their human qualities when mechanical contrivances would not answer. His invention may be described as a Patent Combination Boblowe Humano-Machine, which would be remarkably effective in saving the public revenue, as it would do the work of human beings with human faculties and intelligence, but at the small cost of an ordinary mechanical apparatus. Thus the Patent Combination Boblowe Humano-Machine would have no appetite, and consequently, would never require to eat or drink, and the expense of keeping it clean and in working order would be extremely limited: its mental faculties would be only half

of those of a human being—the *half required for the public service*, and none for itself—and consequently, it would require nothing whatever in the way of intellectual food—no newspapers, no periodicals, no magazines, no books or pamphlets of any kind, no concerts or musical entertainments, or instruments of whatsoever description, no paintings or photographs, or steel or wood engravings, or oleographs or lithographs, or other class of pictures, and no visits to museums, or galleries, or institutions of an educational nature. It would never be ill or out of order in any way, and would therefore require no sick-leave during the whole course of its existence; and as it would have no relations or friends, or affairs of a personal or private character necessitating absence from business, the same advantages would arise in respect to that circumstance also. It would not want any holidays at any time, as these are requisite only in the case of human beings who, having bodies subject to infirmities, and minds that become jaded and anxious, find medicine for both the one and the other in occasional change of air and scene; it would require nothing better in the way of a house than a shanty or shed to keep off the rain, and even that was not of much consequence, and, of course, A HOME was too ridiculous to think about. Obviously, it could have no garden, and would have no greater need for flowers than for furniture. It would not require any clock or watch, because there is generally some cock-crowing going on somewhere, or a railway whistle, and every morning, invariably, the milkman on his rounds, shrieking out as a reminder, down the area-steps, like the yell of a lost Indian, "Milk, B. Lowe!" No amount of tribulation in its neighbourhood would move its bowels of compassion, because it would have no bowels of compassion to move, in which respect it would closely resemble its inventor; and, as the most enthusiastic revivalist would not expect that a machine could be influenced even by the softest of dulcimers or the loudest of trombones, it would never be appealed to for subscriptions, or subjected to expenses in connection with church or with chapel, temple or tabernacle, "barracks," Bethel, or bazaar. It would not require to marry, and therefore, as it would not have a wife or children to provide for, the insignificant expense it entailed at the outset would not be enhanced, though it kept in working order for thirty or forty years: when, by dint of long labour it had become defective, and had ceased to be useful, as it would only have to be thrown out into the street, it would need no pension or superannuation



*"The use of copying **MACHINES**..... should be encouraged."*

*RT HON. H. C. E. CHILDERS.*



of any kind ; and, finally, in consequence of its having never been married, there would be no possibility that, after it had gone back to the earth from whence it was originally taken, widow or orphan would make application to the Government for pecuniary aid.

The Patent Combination Boblowe Humano-Machine was a wonderful invention for doing public work, and at the same time saving public money, the advantages of which are seen to greatest advantage by contrasting it with the regulations applying to ordinary staff clerks, appointed at the same time in Government offices, or those who were already established there, these being in every case human beings, pure and simple—very!

The latter had salaries which commencing under different circumstances, at £80, £90, £100, or perhaps as high as £250 a year, increased annually till they attained to sums of several hundreds of pounds.

Their hours of attendance were not restricted by any invariable rule, unpunctuality in arrival to the extent of half-an-hour, or an hour, being very common in some places, with in others, or perhaps in the same ones, early departure, or absence during the day.

In cases of illness, they could obtain leave of absence, or remain away without it, for any time, from an hour to six months. A feeling of giddiness on reaching business in the morning was sufficient reason for a trip to Gravesend, "a cold in the head" for several weeks' absence, a medical certificate, "of no use to any one but the owner," for half-a-year. Cessation, or diminution of salary under such circumstances was, of course, a thing unheard of.

In time of bereavement, or domestic affliction, or for attending to urgent private affairs, leave of absence was obtained with equal facility, for varying periods, according to the nature of the case, of hours, days or weeks—possibly months also.

Holidays were, and still are, abundant, extending over four, six, or eight weeks, in addition to extra days, such as Christmas, Easter, or the Queen's Birthday.

At the close of their official career, Civil Service officials retire with a pension, which may be as much as their full salary has amounted to ; or, should their labours be dispensed with at an early period of their lives, their appointment being regarded as something in the nature of the presentation of a freehold, they are provided with a comfortable income for the remainder, without any pretence of earning it at all. Thus,

one Government being in power to-day, may make certain regulations under which men will be engaged; and twenty years hence, another Government may decide on introducing what it deems improvements, for the purpose of carrying out which, those who are appointed now, will then be got rid of, and compensated accordingly.

It was Mr. Lowe's great boast that while he had been in office, he had saved fourteen millions of money; though as he was not equally emphatic in pointing out exactly how, when, and where the saving had been effected, it is not easy to accord to him any particular credit for the achievement.

He may have done good service in that respect, or he may not; but while the matter is doubtful, there are other things that admit of no doubt at all. One of these (see Report of the Playfair Commission) is that, in order to attain his end, he did not scruple to resort to such cowardly and unworthy means (see epigram) as the cutting down the pay from about 36s. a week to 30s., regardless of the agreement under which they were serving, of a large body of men, till after weeks of agitation he had to restore them to their former position and yield up what he had till then, withheld. A second thing equally sure is that, whatever economies were introduced, the national expenditure has mounted up in about fourteen years from seventy to eighty-eight millions; a third, that instead of Mr. Lowe's being regarded as a faithful and capable steward of the public property, who is entitled, in an eminent degree, to public gratitude, his name is a bye-word for scorn and contempt; while, as has been mentioned, on the re-formation of the Ministry of which he had previously been so conspicuous and, according to his own account, so valuable, a member, and just after he had promised what "we" were going to do if "we" were returned to office, it was found convenient to make him a viscount; and a fourth thing that admits of no doubt is that when he was giving evidence before the Playfair Commission about his wonderful Civil Service invention—the Patent Combination Boblowe Humano-Machine—he admitted that the whole plan was a mistake, and that, had he at the time known what he then knew, he would never have recommended it.

With reference to the last point, it is characteristic of the man, that the reason why his invention did not answer his expectations, was because he could not keep it secret. His apparatus would not work because he could not succeed in destroying that human feature that was situated inside its mouth. He could not keep the tongue quiet; a machine with

the power of human speech, and that would talk, was no proper machine at all; hence, after the lapse of four years, during which it had been incessantly jabbering, he was bound to confess that it was, as above stated, "a mistake."\* Referring to his patent machines, he said, "One thing we overlooked was the danger of collecting a very large body of persons HAVING FRIENDS ALL OVER THE COUNTRY, having a particular interest, and that interest being to obtain better terms with the Government. I THINK THAT WE OVERLOOKED THE POLITICAL ASPECT OF THE QUESTION. Certain gentlemen have found it very expedient to make political capital out of the ALLEGED grievances of these writers; and I now think that it is a pity that there were collected together some 3,000 persons, or something of the kind, for this sort of employment, all having a common interest to press upon the Government—the raising of their wages."

Whatever claim Mr. Lowe has to be called the most intellectual man of the day, and however great his talents in certain directions, his lack of honour is not more conspicuous than his signal mental deficiency in other directions. His Patent Combination Machine is a case in point. What statesman of ordinary intelligence would suppose it possible to collect together many hundreds of men, not necessarily young, but often middle-aged, from all social ranks, in some cases highly-educated men, or having wide and long experience, or perhaps young and with the needs and aspirations of youth, and while availing himself of all their characteristics which were human, to serve his own purpose, insisting on treating them as mere machines when it came to a question of payment? The plan could only possibly succeed in the long run by its being kept secret, and his machines *would talk*; while he, being denied by nature any of the gift of tact, but having an extra allowance of churlishness in its place, kept on provoking them to make more and more noise, instead of seeing that he could have silenced them altogether by the simple process of putting a small amount of sweetmeat in their mouths, and threatening to take it away if they did not be quiet.

In spite of the right honourable Robert's great achievements at the Exchequer, Mr. Gladstone apparently did not think that

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\* Two days after the MS. of this book was placed in the hands of the printer, the author's attention was called to a notice in the paper that on the evening of that same day, some of the machines had been jabbering at the Westminster Town Hall, under the presidency of Mr. J. H. Puleston, M.P.

there would be any considerable gain by his continuing to achieve in the same way, and so he took his place himself some time before the Ministry went out of office. With Mr. Gladstone at the Treasury, the machines jabbered as usual, at that time, with such effect that he made two concessions to them, namely, in favour of leave of absence in case of sickness, and for holidays. These concessions by Mr. Gladstone, entitle him to be regarded somewhat more favourably than any of the other Chancellors with whom the machines have had to do; apart from which circumstance, those who are anxious to see abuses cut down, and reforms instituted, can scarcely in fairness to him, be hard in their criticisms, because he is the great political reformer of the day, at the same time not possessed of the offensive manners that distinguished Mr. Lowe; and as, whenever great reforms are brought about, somebody must necessarily suffer, at least for a time, there is no ground for complaint on that score, provided the grievances are redressed after a sufficient time has elapsed for them to be accurately estimated. Sir Stafford Northcote is not entitled to any considerateness of criticism, because during all the years that he was Chancellor, from 1874 to 1880, he never made any concession whatever to the Patent Combination Machines, while he would never have had sufficient capacity to have invented them himself. Mr. Childers has not, thus far, held the same office long, and it remains to be seen whether or not he will have good sense enough to remove an evil, now of many years' standing. At present for his views on the subject, we are dependent upon his evidence given before the Playfair Commission which sat from 1874 to 1876.

When Mr. Lowe invented his Patent Machine, he required a name for it; and in the same way as Mr. Maskelyne applied to, in some respects, a similar invention, the now familiar name of "Zoe," Mr. Lowe called his by the term "Writer." This word has two ordinary significations, one being of a literary character, in which sense it implies "Author," and the other simply "one who writes," a term equally applicable to every one, both in and out of the Civil Service; there is likewise a third signification familiar in legal circles, and refers to a class of men employed in solicitors' offices for the engrossing of deeds and so on, the term being used in contradistinction to that of "clerks," who are, practically, themselves, solicitors. It was, presumably, in the third sense that the term "writer" was used by Mr. Lowe, with reference to his Patent Combination Copying Machines,



though when on the occasion of the Playfair Commission, Civil Service matters were well sifted, it was discovered that the machines were not simply copying machines at all, but as a fact, *Assistant Clerks*, though regarded, nevertheless, by the Government, in the light of machines, in order that they might be treated accordingly. Ostensibly engaged for the purpose of mere copying, it had been the custom, notwithstanding, for the heads of departments to assign them any duties requiring to be done which they were capable of doing, and about ten years ago, orders were issued by the Government to confirm the practice—"that whenever a vacancy occurred in the ranks of the clerks, it was to be filled by a 'writer,' if he was able to do the work." No alteration, however, was made in their pay, or in their general treatment, and hence appears the reason for retaining the term by which they were officially known. Mr. Childers, in his evidence before Dr. Playfair, advocated having two distinct classes in addition to the regular clerks, namely, "copyists," and "writers"—the latter "a term," he said, "now perfectly well understood," the men to whom it referred being for a much higher class of work than the former. He was quite right in saying that the term "writer" was now perfectly well understood, and the definition itself indicates the reason for its permanent use. It meant simply UNPAID CLERKS—those who should regularly do the work of the public in the various Government offices, but without being remunerated for it. If two men were engaged in the same room and at the same table, one receiving several hundred pounds a year and privileges to match, and the other, after deducting, say, sixpence for a railway ticket, four shillings and sixpence a day, and the latter remonstrated against the injustice of his not being properly paid, he would be met with the taunt that he was a "writer," and therefore not entitled to be; that he was, in fact, a Patent Combination Boblowe Humano-Machine, invented for the express purpose of transacting public business with human faculties and human skill in return for the treatment accorded to a machine! Hence it is easy to see why there should be retained what is in reality an insulting epithet, because the true and characteristic definition of "*Assistant Clerks*" would be too suggestive of the fitting salaries to which such officers would be, and in fact are, entitled.

Injustice, oppression, deception, and insult have characterized the treatment accorded to the *Assistant Clerks* ever since they have had any official existence. The purpose of this

brochure is to do something towards improving their position by the three following methods ; To advise themselves as to their mode of procedure ; To enlist the sympathy of the House of Commons on their behalf ; and, To warn the Government of its folly in the course that it has hitherto pursued. An allusion is made on plate 12, which, though professedly humorous, is not without a substratum of reality, to the feeling of desperation that the unjust and tyrannical conduct of the Government has engendered, and that, sooner or later, they may feel the effects of in ways they do not anticipate, if they persistently follow the same line of conduct in the future. We hear from time to time of dynamite explosions, and they are immediately set down to Fenians ; no one seems ever to entertain a moment's thought that they may be the work of exasperated Civil Service clerks. The writer of this is not in a position to attribute any past event of the kind to the men whose circumstances are under consideration, and probably, had they been the authors of it, he would not be made aware of the fact ; but he very well knows that for some time the performance of such deeds have been in contemplation within their ranks, that all accounts of those that do occur are carefully scanned from feelings of *personal* interest, and that the opening up of negotiations with O'Donovan Rossa for the sale of the services which the English Government has used for years, but refuses to pay for, is an event within measurable distance. The writer's mind was running on this subject as he read an article on Whit-Monday in the *Daily Telegraph*, strongly reflecting on the cowardice and so on of the perpetrators of the then recent outrages. The Editor assumed that, of course, they were the work of Fenians ; but then he himself is not accustomed to work without being paid, and if he was just to suppose a case of which he was the subject, perhaps he might come to the conclusion that his inferences are not, after all, so assuredly correct. Let him suppose himself writing leader after leader, day after day, week after week, and year after year, and instead of being paid for them, being kept in a perpetual state of semi-starvation of body and mind, and deprived of the necessities of life, because his employers, who were merely agents on behalf of others, whose money they appropriated for themselves and for their friends with great liberality, refused to pay him what he had earned, in order that they might figure before the world as patriotic statesmen. It is doubtful if there are not at the present time Assistant Clerks who have been subject to similar treatment for ten or even twelve years ; and is it to be expected

that they will go on and on, honourably, industriously, and loyally, with a knowledge and habitual consciousness of money being due to them from the Government, the amount of which every year grows larger, and never feel stung with indignation at the conduct of the half-dozen men who so wrong them? As each year the debt becomes larger, so each year adds to the amount which eventually will have to be paid before the matter is finally settled; for whenever an improved system is introduced, and the Assistant Clerks are treated with what may be considered fairness and honour, the terms must date backward to the commencement of their career to be accepted by them as satisfactory, as there would be no circumstances to constitute a claim for change at all that would not of necessity be of a retrospective character. Consequently every year adds to the spirit of discontent; and although, as a whole, these men are respectable and loyal in their deportment, "Surely oppression maketh a wise man mad," and there may come a time when even their patience will stretch no longer, and if the Government change not its conduct, it will have to yield to force that which it denies to remonstrance and a sense of propriety.

The writer takes this opportunity of appealing to Honourable Members of the House of Commons, that they, as custodians of the public purse, and the persons really responsible to the nation for the due expenditure of the money levied in taxes, will bring the matter of the Assistant Clerks in the Civil Service prominently forward, and compel the Ministry to treat them in a manner that shall be in accordance with justice and statesmanship. Let them consider the sheer folly and stupidity of having fifteen hundred or two thousand men scattered through all the public offices, and acquainted with all the details of Government work—men, as a body, possessed of large and varied experience in all callings of life, and instead of being, *if only as a matter of policy*, treated in that conciliatory manner that would be a safeguard against their knowledge and position being used hostilely towards the Government, being systematically insulted and plundered, and kept "on the raw" by a mode of treatment that is in distinct opposition to official opinions expressed in Blue Books, and that not a single Minister or ex-Minister, could, or would even dare, to attempt to justify before any public tribunal, where he was subjected to cross-examination. They may attempt on certain occasions, and in certain places, to justify their conduct by the use of the official kaleidoscope; but on

such occasions they keep it in their own hands, and all their attempted justification would be scattered to the winds, directly the instrument was held by any one else. The explanation of the illustration is this: There are various principles on which to found regulations, and these are sometimes of an opposite character; and the Government, instead of making up its mind as to which is the sound and true principle to go upon in each case, and then applying it universally, puts all these principles into its kaleidoscope, forms a pattern, and holds it up to public view to explain its conduct with regard to one class of its servants: and, then, in order to explain and justify its conduct to another class, gives the instrument a turn so that the pattern is formed by all its constituent features being placed in a directly opposite position with regard to each other, to that which they before occupied. Thus, one principle is that men should be fairly remunerated for the services they render, wholly irrespective of the consideration whether or not others could be found to do the work at a lower rate, the opposing principle being that the Government, in the discharge of its duty to the country, is bound to get its work done at the lowest price at which it is procurable. Applying this practically, when a pattern is required on which to make the regulations for highly-placed and highly-paid servants, the kaleidoscope is so held that the first principle is in the ascendant, and the second one below, but as soon as a pattern is wanted for the poorest men employed, the instrument is turned upside down, and the two principles are reversed.

A second brace of principles is that of the recognition and non-recognition of the obligations of marriage. "As the clerk gets older, when his responsibilities in life increase" are the words that Dr. Playfair applied to the upper principle-constituent in the pattern formed by the official kaleidoscope when he advocated rapidly rising salaries for the already better paid men; but when a pattern is wanted for those who only assist them, or do the work that they leave undone, this conspicuous feature is whisked out of the instrument altogether, and sent up the official sleeve, till some one else's claims are under consideration, when it is all ready to be whisked back again to its former place. The Government practically decrees that the Assistant Clerks shall remain unmarried, or that if they are already married or presume to marry, their rash and wicked conduct shall be punished by a sure and certain descent in the social scale,

as that sum of money which at their first engagement was sufficient only for the requirements of one person has to be made to do duty for two, three, half-a-dozen, or a dozen, as the case may be. An illustration of this is seen in the frontispiece, which was suggested by a clever and telling sketch of Messrs. Cassell and Co.'s, in the prospectus of their *Popular Educator*, a work recommended by Mr. Lowe for the study of working men. It suggests a third batch of principles, namely, the cultivation of education. The House of Commons is asked to sanction the spending, during the current financial year, of upwards of three million pounds of public money for the purpose of educating those who render nothing in return; while others, who for many years have been engaged in giving good service to the Government, are not paid sufficiently to justify their spending a penny a day on a newspaper. Self-culture is impossible, for materials are wanting; and as during their official hours they only earn enough to pay for a dinner and tea, they must afterwards look about for some other way of occupying their "spare" time so as to earn supper, and breakfast for the next morning. The author has known of one of these Assistant Clerks, who, during the winter, when his associates in the office had left business to spend the evening in comfortable homes, had to go, in order to earn a trifle more money, fifty miles or thereabouts into the country to play on the stage of a provincial theatre, and return in the cold and dark on the following day, so as to be at business at the regular hour. In the absence of any knowledge as to the name of the play in which he performed, we will suppose that it was *The Luxurious Lord and the Violent Virgin*; or, *Villainy Vanquished and Virtue Victorious*; and we will hope that the sequel prefigures the actor's own ultimate triumph over the myrmidons whom he has so long served, and that he will "live happy ever after." The constant want of money in a home so familiarises its occupants with the contemplation of things undone that ought to be done, as naturally to induce a feeling of despondency and despair; and this, coupled with an absence of any influence of a mental or religious character calculated to elevate, deadens the sense of right and wrong, producing a feeling of recklessness and a general demoralisation. Let Members of Parliament contemplate the figures in the lower line of the frontispiece, and know that to produce such effects in the case of the Assistant Clerks in the Civil Service has been the constant policy of successive Governments, who are never weary of heaping up expenditure for educational

purposes on behalf of those who have no direct claim upon them ; and let those Members recollect that if the figures sketched are not actual representations of living realities, no thanks are due to the Government that they are not so, as Messrs. Lowe, Gladstone, Northcote, Childers, and Co., with their subordinates have done their best to produce them ; and, directly or indirectly, they are doing it at this present moment. Let them deny it if they can.

Allusion has been made to the concessions granted by Mr. Gladstone, during his previous term of office as Chancellor of the Exchequer, in the matter of sick-leave and holidays ; but in keeping with the spirit of malignity which has marked the treatment of the Assistant Clerks ever since they have been employed, these small concessions are not made without decided drawbacks. In case of illness, a medical certificate must be obtained, to enable the holder of it to be paid for his time of absence, the sum received will then be only three-fourths of the regular amount, and the leave granted under such circumstances will not be allowed to exceed twelve days in a year. There are many instances in which a man might be excused from attendance for a day or two, when his illness is so apparent to everyone, that a certificate is unnecessary ; and if he is then compelled to procure it, it may involve him in an expense that makes it cost more than it is worth. If a violent tooth-ache rendered him unable to work, and induced him to leave for home at two o'clock instead of four, when next he received his dole, a deduction would be made for two hours' absence, because, in compliance with the law of the Medes and Persians, which altereth not—the Medes and Persians in this case being the aforesaid Lowe, Gladstone, Northcote, Childers and Co., and their subs—a devoted and conscientious discharge of duty to the public, renders it imperative that the latter should not be subjected to taxation to pay a man who is away ill, and that the eight hundred millions of the National Debt should not be enhanced from the same cause, by the addition of the unnecessary and unproductive sum of one shilling and eight pence ! If, however, the sick man likes to pay half-a-guinea for a duly qualified medical practitioner to certify that his face is twice the usual size, he will be allowed to receive fifteen pence, or three-quarters of twenty pence, in which case the public will be compelled, *volens volens*, to face the exaction, and when the fifteen-penny yoke is fixed upon its shoulders, to “grin and bear it.”

The concession, on account of holidays is, one day without loss of pay, for every twenty-four of approved work, but, collectively, they must not exceed twelve days in a year, so that nothing can be carried forward from the previous twelve months, without a corresponding loss in the present one. The effect of this is immaterial in the case of short engagements, but its irksomeness is felt when a clerk is permanently engaged in the same office; as, should he desire to take all his humble holidays at one time, he must necessarily wait till December to be able to do so. This regulation, it must be admitted, is not without its advantages; for should the man have a fondness for the country, and an eye for artistic beauty, he may, by going away at the end of the year, obtain a far better view of the effect of a snow-storm over a wide area, than he could hope for in London, while if he prefers the sea-side and likes bathing, he will probably find the rent of lodgings less than at any other season, and the temperature of the water eminently calculated to stimulate his health. But such is the perverseness of human nature—and the human nature of the Assistant Clerks is no exception to the rule—that instead of being thankful for these privileges, the ingrates are unreasonable enough to wish to be able to find what little modicum of happiness is procurable from their small and inexpensive vacation, at the same time of the year that other persons like to find their larger supply; and they are even willing to forego the ecstasy derivable from the contemplation of a snowed-up cowshed, or the stimulating of their epidermis by the congealed billows of the stormy main, for the sake of a little relaxation during the more genial period between May and October. In keeping with this malignant regulation, which nevertheless, is all of a piece with the treatment of the Assistant Clerks in other respects, is the refusal to pay them for their holidays till after their close. Thus, one day's leave being given without loss of pay for twenty-four days' work, it is evident that twenty-four days' work earns twenty-five days' pay; but if a man does this twenty-four days' work, and wishes, and obtains leave to take a day's holiday, instead of his receiving the twenty-five days' pay which he has earned, the authorities say, "No, twenty-four days only have elapsed, you can only have twenty-four days' pay: the twenty-fifth day must elapse also before you will be entitled to receive the twenty-fifth day's pay," notwithstanding the fact that the twenty-fifth day was a day of leave of absence in which no work was done. Apply the

principle to the case of a man who has worked only for four weeks, which terminate on a Saturday, and that he is not required longer in the office, he would still be entitled to a holiday on the following Monday (and the Civil Service Commissioners expect that he will take his holidays wherever he has earned them); instead of giving him the money that he had earned and letting him get what enjoyment he could out of his day's leave, the Department in which he had served would insist on paying him up to Saturday only, when his engagement practically terminated, and although Monday was avowedly a holiday for which he was to receive payment, it would require that he made a business of going specially to the office on that or on some other day, at whatever cost of time or money in order to get the day's pay which had been earned by the four weeks' labour terminating on the previous Saturday. When this regulation is applied to a fortnight's holiday, its injustice and petty tyranny are not less apparent, an illustration of which may be given. The Author knew a clerk whose "holidays" were taken on this wise: he had a week in reserve from the previous year which he had not utilised, and having some friends who were going during the summer to a country town some distance from London, he determined to go with them, and took a ticket accordingly, available to return at the close of his holidays. He received his customary weekly dole, and being, of course, in a condition of chronic impecuniosity, he had nothing material to take with him beyond that regular Saturday allowance. He had earned a fortnight's pay in addition, and was entitled to receive it, but for the reason given, it was refused. Hence, he had to go with what little he possessed, and trust to chance as to how he got on. His friends were better off than he, and probably money went faster than he had intended it should. After a week he had to find an excuse for coming up to London, the real reason of his doing so, being to get the salary *that had become due while he was away*; he then returned, and when at length, his "*twelve days' leave without loss of pay*" for the year's work came to a close, it consisted of six days instead of twelve (owing to the season at which it was taken), less one broken day for a special visit to London, and at the cost of a second and unnecessary long-journey return ticket. This may be taken as a fair specimen of the line of conduct that has been pursued with unvarying regularity by successive Governments, whose members desire to pose before the public as looking after its pecuniary interests, towards a large, and honourable,



and capable body of their servants, and it would probably be vain to look into the treatment received by recognised and convicted criminals in gaols throughout the country to find anything at all on a footing with it for official venom; while how much benefit the taxpayer derives from it may be judged from the fact that it is only adopted in dealing with those whose pay is of the lowest, nothing of the kind being ever thought of for men who luxuriate in salaries of many hundred pounds a year. But of the various occasions when the conduct of the Government in its dealings with the Assistant Clerks is disgraceful, perhaps the most shameful of all is that at the time of domestic affliction. In all classes of society some consideration is commonly shown to those who are the subjects of it, and as regards the highly-paid clerks in the Civil Service, they can always, at such times, have a certain amount of indulgence, in the form of absence for a few days or weeks. Not so, the Assistant Clerks; with them such times only serve to show to greater effect the incandescent brilliancy of the lofty patriotism of England's great statesmen! Not one day's absence is allowed without loss of pay, and consequently, if a man is away, however urgent and sacred may be the cause which occasions his absence, down upon him the magnanimous ones swoop, like vultures on their quarry, and snatch away every penny of the money that he would otherwise receive. It may be that a beloved wife or child is at the point of death, or a father or mother; it may be that their illness is aggravated by very painful attendant circumstances, and followed by death; and the time is one not only of mental and bodily strain, but of heavy pecuniary outlay, which has to be met by some unknown process—as four and sixpence a day will not admit of providing for such extravagances as doctors and undertakers. Nevertheless, when all is over, and the man, weary in body and dejected in mind, returns to his desk, Lowe and Gladstone, and Northcote and Childers, if not in their own persons, through their agents, figuratively fly at his throat, and will not release their Shylock-grip till they have scrupulously and conscientiously taken measures to prevent the British nation being robbed of a sou, by having to pay for the services of one who, instead of doing its work, as he was supposed to be doing, was in reality watching beside a dying bed, or mourning over an open grave! Then, with consciences clear in the faithful discharge of their duty to their constituents and the country, Lowe could fitly, in the

House, express his regret, as on the occasion of the Cave of Adullam episode, that the Bible is not more known than it is ; Northcote can take the chair at the Annual Meeting of the Bible Society, and eloquently dwell upon the blessed influences of the Scriptures on the moral character of the King of the Cannibal Islands and his Finance Minister ; and Gladstone can read the Lessons in Hawarden Church, while a crowded congregation listens to his impressive and sonorous tones, as he utters the solemn admonition : “ Rob not the poor BECAUSE HE IS POOR : neither oppress the afflicted in the gate : for the Lord will plead their cause, and spoil the soul of those that spoiled them.”

It has been stated that the Blue Book evidence is in opposition to such treatment as is here described, and that Ministers would quite fail in endeavouring to justify it as a consistent and proper course ; furthermore, it is a fact that, in rendering his report eight years ago, Dr. Playfair remarked that no one wished to preserve this part of the scheme. Whether by “ this part of the scheme ” is to be understood the unconditional employment of a large body of Assistant Clerks, gathered from all classes, and occupying a semi-detached position in the Service, or simply the employing them on the unjust terms that had prevailed hitherto, it is to be remarked that although, according to that report, no one wished to preserve it, it has been preserved till the present time, and there is no prospect of its abolition by the spontaneous action of the Government ; at the same time, so far as the writer is concerned, though he has known many men in various positions in the Civil Service for many years, he has no remembrance of hearing a single opinion expressed against the mode of employment in itself, or that it ought to be done away with, neither does he know the least reason why it should be. The failure, in his view, is not on account of the system, but in the manner of its application, for it is a radically good system, with much to recommend it to all concerned, being in the case of the clerks, a boon to many necessitous persons, who are glad to put into any port under stress of weather, and in the case of the public, a legitimate means of getting a great deal of good work done at about fifty per cent. under its actual value. If this was properly managed there is no reason why it should not be entirely successful, but it is essential that the mode adopted should be characterized by upright conduct, and by intelligence, and not by crafty and fraudulent manœuvring

directed with malignity of disposition towards the procuring of labour under false pretences, and employing it in such a manner that it must not be talked about, because it will not bear the light of day.

Subjoined are some suggestions as to the method of putting a stop to the disquietude that prevails, and that is likely to prevail, while the system is maintained under existing circumstances—a method that being just and judicious to all concerned, is calculated to confer signal benefits, both upon the clerks who are the servants, and upon the public who are their employers. The proposed regulations are made so as to be as far as possible of general applicability in all offices.

#### [SUGGESTED REGULATIONS.]

##### OBJECT TO BE ATTAINED.

There being considerable variation in the amount of work to be performed in the public offices of the Civil Service, that amount at certain seasons, or upon particular occasions, being largely in excess of the usual supply, and much of this and of the ordinary work being of a simple and easily-acquired character, for which special educational qualifications are not necessary: and further, there being a large floating population of persons in many stations of life desirous of obtaining employment, though but of a temporary or subordinate kind, it is deemed advisable in the interests of the public, especially in respect of the saving of money, to utilize the services of this floating population by drawing from it a supplementary class of clerks, who, it is expected, will regard the Civil Service as a temporary accommodation, and not as a means of obtaining a permanent livelihood; and who, though perhaps in fact, as a matter of mutual convenience, remaining in it for a long period, will not, from the particular circumstances under which they are engaged, ever have a right to claim, or to look forward to, the higher privileges accorded to the regular staff, who enter under more difficult and exacting conditions.

##### CONDITIONS OF ENTRANCE INTO THE SERVICE.

Theseshall be much the same as to qualifications as are already in force with regard to the class known

[SUGGESTED REGULATIONS, *continued.*]

as "writers" or "copyists," but no one shall be admitted who is not a fairly good and neat penman. No one shall be admitted under 25 years of age, so as to ensure that candidates shall have had some useful experience elsewhere and to exclude inexperienced lads of 19 or 20, who would be apt to settle down and regard the public service as their life-long career. No one shall be admitted above 50 years of age.

## TITLE AND NATURE OF DUTIES.

The official title by which the supplementary class of Civil servants is known shall be consistent with the duties they will have to perform, and their duties shall be consistent with their title. They are not to be one thing and to be called another, in order to avoid paying them for what they do. They will be required to assist in any of the duties of a clerky character that have to be done, and that are within their capacity, these not being of the nature of "accomplishments," and beyond the ability of the regular staff. Their duties will be assigned them at the discretion of the head of the department in which they are engaged, and they will be called "Assistant Clerks."

## HOURS OF ATTENDANCE.

The hours of attendance to be uniformly 9 to 5, except on Saturdays, one hour being the extreme limit for rest and refreshment; on Saturdays, 9 to 2, without any break. A total of 45 hours in the office, or 40 hours of actual work during the week, for any clerk engaged in the Civil Service is sufficient to entitle him to thereby earn a livelihood, according to his official position, whatever it may be; giving less than that number, he has not such claim, for the time is too short, and leaves enough at his disposal to engage in other pursuits. Furthermore, the Government has no right to take the pick of a man's time for itself, and compel him to seek other employment in addition, in order to get a living.

[SUGGESTED REGULATIONS, *continued.*]

## REMUNERATION.

Pay to be for the first year 10d. an hour for 45 hours weekly, making £1 17s. 6d. In case of a clerk's remaining for more than a year, an advance of 5 per cent., or one half-penny an hour, to be made on commencing the second; and should he remain till its close, the total increment to be not less than £5 for the year. Under similar circumstances, a corresponding advance to be made in the third year, and so on for a period not exceeding twenty years, or the attaining to the age of 60.

## TENURE OF OFFICE.

No constancy of occupation to be promised for the first three years; but after a clerk has been actually employed in one or more offices for that period of time, without anything occurring to occasion the removal of his name from the Register, he shall, when not elsewhere engaged, be regarded as on the staff of the Civil Service Commission, and shall receive half-pay during such periods: it will devolve on heads of departments to keep the Civil Service Commissioners as well informed as they can as to the length of time they require the services of Assistant Clerks, and as to when they anticipate dismissing them, and also on the Civil Service Commissioners themselves to avoid having a superabundance of names of persons whom they have no likelihood of employing.

## HOLIDAYS.

The system of holidays without loss of pay being, in the case of clerks whose engagements are temporary and variable, open to objections, shall not be adopted; but in its place there shall be a *corresponding augmentation of salary*,—the clerk being then at liberty, by losing his pay during the time of absence, to have any day or number of days' holiday he likes, subject to the convenience of the department in which he serves, and not exceeding, say, a month in a year. The time of taking these shall be settled by arrangement with his superior officer, without

[SUGGESTED REGULATIONS, *continued.*]

unreasonable demands on either side. The allowance by this method, would be, instead of one day for every twenty-four days, one shilling for every twenty-four shillings, and one penny for every twenty-four pence; the advantages will be so obvious to those concerned that explanation is unnecessary.

## SICK LEAVE.

In case of simple ailments, the head of a department shall have authority to grant leave of absence for a day or two, without loss of pay, if he considers it to be necessary. If the illness be of a more serious character, a medical certificate shall be required, and payment shall then be made to the extent of three-fourths of the regular amount. The limit for this indulgence to be twelve days in a year during the first three years, twenty-four days afterwards.

## SPECIAL LEAVE.

In case of domestic affliction or bereavement, or the having to attend to such imperative duties as the proving of a will, the necessary leave of absence shall be granted by the head of a department, who shall be made acquainted with the circumstances under which the favour is sought. The assigning of any limit for this leave would be liable to abuse, and must therefore be left to the discretion of the chief; but speaking generally, as the concession is made only in unavoidable and extreme cases, it should scarcely be less to an Assistant Clerk than to one permanently established.

## RETIRING ALLOWANCE.

The regulations as to retiring allowance to be consistent with those dealing with other matters: the principle being borne in mind that the Assistant Clerks are not formally acknowledged as part of the regular establishment, the amount of pension or superannuation accorded them shall not be such as to offer any inducement to them to remain in the service permanently, instead of bettering their

[SUGGESTED REGULATIONS, *continued.*]

position elsewhere ; and to this end facilities shall be afforded to leave at any time without sustaining consequent loss ; but there being a recognised obligation on the part of the Government to pay to all well-placed men something in excess of that which is monthly and yearly received by them, in view of their need at that time of life when they shall be beyond work, the same obligation shall be recognised in the case of those who assist them in their duties, and the claim of these also shall be admitted to a grant, the amount of which is to be arrived at by the same method of calculation adopted in the case of the others. A scale of commutation, however, shall be provided, available at any period, that no man, having served for a certain time shall have reason to feel that by continuing in the same place he will affect a gain on his past services that he will lose if he goes away, the advantage to the Government being in his leaving rather than in his remaining, so that some one else may take his place at a lower rate of pay than he would be entitled to by continuing. No Assistant Clerk shall have any claim for retiring allowance during the first three years of service ; but if remaining after that time, his claim shall date from his first appointment.

## TEMPORARY RETIREMENT.

It being the custom in some cases for Assistant Clerks, on the close of an engagement in one office, and on some better employment of a temporary character offering itself elsewhere, to avail themselves of the opportunity, and to return afterwards to Cannon Row, such practice shall not be interfered with, provided the clerk does not, on his going away, commute the pension which he may have earned ; but no one after the break shall be allowed any advantage of his past services : the period of his re-engagement shall be the date from which to calculate any privileges for prolonged service, while if he commutes his pension, his name shall be removed from the Register, and he shall be ineligible for future employment under any conditions whatever.

[SUGGESTED REGULATIONS, *continued.*]

## LOCALITY.

The foregoing regulations shall apply as fully as possible to all Assistant Clerks, irrespective of whether they are employed perpetually in a single office, or in more than one, their services being recognised as being of equal value in both cases.

By the adoption of such a code of regulations as the above every occasion of unjust and unreasonable treatment is removed, at the same time that the public has the benefit of good service from able men at a large reduction from its actual value. The transaction is in the nature of "a bargain," in which case a sale takes place under such circumstances that without anything of a fraudulent character, each party concerned derives a benefit which he could not obtain in the ordinary way of business.

Reference has repeatedly been made to the dishonest and deceptive character of the system as now in force, and the following extracts will be sufficient to justify the expressions used, though evidence could be multiplied to an indefinite extent.

## EXTRACT FROM DR. PLAYFAIR'S REPORT, 1876.

"The division of labour contemplated by the establishment of Civil Service writers is wholly inadequate, and has failed."

## EXTRACT FROM REGULATIONS OF CIVIL SERVICE COMMISSIONERS, 1881.

"Copyists, as a rule, are not meant to be employed upon any work except mere copying or routine work, under the direct supervision of established officers."

EXTRACT FROM LETTER OF "PERMANENT CLERK" IN *Times*, 1882.

"Considerably over 1,000 writers (too hastily termed 'Copyists' by the Civil Service Commissioners . . . a term which 'My Lords' do not wholly adhere to), doing clerks' work, but receiving pay at the fixed rate of 10d. an hour, a rate which the Playfair Commissioners themselves declared to be utterly inadequate if the writers were to be



retained on the work for which the new class were to be created. This is the grievance, Sir. Is it possible that men can go on working year after year under a sense of gross injustice without being discontented and *demoralized*? There is no denying the fact that the writers are, for all practical purposes, permanently employed, and yet the State, while reaping an enormous advantage by their services, refuses to grant them adequate remuneration, *or any of the privileges which are accorded to the very humblest member of the establishment*. In my own office, for instance—the General Register Office—there is a permanent staff of writers, acknowledged by the Treasury as such, and the vacancies in which are filled up in the same way as in either of the permanent classes of the same office. Some of these men have been ten years in the service, and the chiefs are continually lamenting their inability to do anything for such old yet ill-paid servants. To show the capabilities of the class in question, I may mention that out of four of these writers serving as census clerks at the present time, three are heads of rooms at the Census Office, and the fourth is employed in the Accountant's branch, and not long since compiled an excellent article on the census for *Chambers' Journal*, which won the approval of the Registrar General."

The last extract strongly supports, in a few lines, a variety of points put forth in this book. Among others, the malignant venom that denies to valuable and honourable servants the privileges that without question, and as a matter of course, are accorded to the door-keepers and messengers, the system of misrepresentation in obtaining men under the pretence of "copying" for high-class work, and the demoralization that is to be looked for in those so treated. Patient, industrious, and loyal, they have during their whole career proved themselves to be; but who could blind their eyes to the fact that there is one argument to which English Governments yield implicitly—namely, that *of force*, and that if one official concerned was only subjected at their hands to, say, a sound caning, the evils which have been borne unresistingly for ten or a dozen years, would immediately disappear? That is a mode of attaining reforms that, unhappily, appeals to the sympathies of ruling men of both political parties, and it is their wont to cultivate disorder by refusing demands till such means have been resorted to. The Conservatives have never ceased to taunt Mr. Gladstone with having disestablished the Irish Church, as a reply to the Clerkenwell explosion; but for all their taunts, such was their

own policy a year before, in the matter of the extension of the franchise. The claims of justice and intelligence were met with opposition and ridicule; but the obstinate men who would not yield to right or reason or remonstrance, yielded without a struggle or a word, as soon as the Park railings came down. It is deeply lamentable that such perverseness should characterize those in high position, yet so it does; and to orderly and law-abiding persons there is the melancholy reflection that far into the future, those Hyde Park railings will tell their own tale, and be an incentive to violence and disorder.

As far as the treatment of the Assistant Clerks in the Civil Service is concerned, there is nothing to be said in favour of either political party, the so-called *Liberals* being as bad as the Conservatives; and it will not be out of place to introduce here a remark of a present Cabinet Minister, made on the 8th of January, 1880, when the former Government was in power, and then to go on to consider in particular some of the views expressed before the Playfair Commission by the present Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Childers. Speaking at the Annual Meeting of the Liberal Association of St. Mary's Ward, Birmingham, Mr. Chamberlain said, "The present Government regarded considerations of humanity and justice as the characteristics of weak philanthropists like Mr. Gladstone, which ought not to enter into the consideration of statesmen like Lord Beaconsfield and Lord Salisbury." Mr. Chamberlain is apparently an advocate for justice and philanthropy; moreover, he has had much experience as a manufacturer of screws: perhaps he will "monopolize" what others have left undone, and supply the Assistant Clerks with *screws* of the most approved pattern.

An examination of Mr. Childers' evidence on the occasion alluded to will show that he is a firm believer in the virtues of the double action official kaleidoscope—in fact double or treble, or quadruple action, according to the designs wanted. There were to be two classes of Assistant Clerks, such, presumably, as those mentioned in the extract above, quoted from a "Permanent Clerk," and those who are *bonâ fide* copyists and that only. The first were to be known as "writers," the second as "copyists." The term "writer," as originally intended, and when meant to apply only to those who should be employed on similar duties to the class known in legal offices by the same name, was excusable, and not necessarily offensive; but there is not the smallest justification for its application to men, officially and formally recognised as

engaged on higher duties. There is no purpose to be served by calling them by any other name than a correct one, unless the object is insult, or to get their services without paying for them. The plan of dividing them into two classes is not less objectionable, the idea being to recognise the upper of the two as being officially "established." Something of this kind was carried into effect in the formation of the "Lower Division," the members of which have been complaining of the treatment they receive, ever since they have been established. They are subject to conditions sufficiently improved to lift them in some respects a trifle above the ordinary Assistant Clerks; at the same time they are not treated well enough for an officially recognised position. It is difficult to see how the arrangement affects any substantial good at all. Certainly, if there are any advantages from it, they are very inadequate. When a clerk of the Lower Division receives an appointment, he remains permanently in the same office, and is supposed not to do any simply routine work; and the convenience of having a class of Assistant Clerks, consists in their adaptability to the changing circumstances of various offices in which they are from time to time engaged. The method of having copyists for copying only, answers well enough in certain places; but as the class is wanted for general utility anywhere, and not for specific service in two or three isolated localities, the gain in one direction of having them is more than offset by the loss in another. The saving of money is the object in view in this plan, but it is not a justifiable one, as there is no reason why the Government should recognise the expenses of marriage and of advancing life, and the value of prolonged service in every branch and class of its employes, with the exception of those who are engaged in transcribing, and refuse to do it in their case—even on the assumption that they did no work whatever of a higher character. If there started in the service of the Government at one time a clerk with £250 a year, another with £100 a year, an Assistant Clerk with 30/- a week, a messenger or hall-keeper, a telegraph clerk, male or female, a policeman\* and a letter carrier, the Government would in every case give year by year increasing remuneration, with the solitary exception of to the Assistant Clerk, and to him they would persistently deny it; although in the course of, say, ten years, the value of his service rendered, as judged by the amounts paid to others,

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\* Read in papers of 1st instant the debate in the House of Commons the day previous on the subject of Police Superannuation. *July, 1864.*

would be perhaps £1,000, £1,500, or £2,000 in excess of what he had received. For this line of conduct there is not a tittle of justification ; and it is only to be accounted for by observing the malignity that actuated Mr. Lowe when he originated it, and that his successors in office have seemed so anxious to emulate. Another point of Mr. Childers' policy was with regard to pensions, and there he was as incoherent and unjudicial as in other things. He has no sound, fixed principles on which to regulate the Government action in the matter. He advances as an argument against giving pensions to Assistant Clerks, that they do not expect it when they enter the service. What a reason to advance ! The statement may be true to some extent, because it is not unlikely that it may happen that when a man enters the service, being wholly inexperienced as to its duties, it is not his intention to remain for more than a brief period, though, when once there, he settles down, and finding himself amongst thousands of others who gain a respectable livelihood in the same way, and there being no lack of employment, he keeps on from year to year. Nevertheless, though he remained for thirty years, and during the whole period had not received money enough to meet the current expenses of life, he ought to have no pension, according to Mr. Childers' view, because he had not expected to receive one when he had entered thirty years before, quite ignorant of what was before him ! Mr. Childers, however, speaks reproachfully and regretfully of those persons who "unfortunately do not—are not accustomed to make provision for their old age," a practice undoubtedly very common where they have no means with which to make such provision, and where they are perpetually deprived by their employers of the money which they earn by the labours of successive years ! And it may even be these reckless, improvident people who, when they are in present need, accept the employment offered by the Government without stipulating before they do half an hour's work, that they shall be superannuated thirty years hence. Reckless servants, not to bargain for pay before they had any idea they were going to work for it ! Extravagant employers, to give remuneration to servants who have not stipulated for it before they had any idea that it was going to be earned ! Mr. Childers has another luminous idea on the subject ; he speaks about the Assistant Clerks coming from *the class of life who are accustomed to provide for their old age in other ways!* Now, what class of life is that ? The term is used in contradistinction to the other class or classes who provide

for their old age by living on the public money—earned or unearned as the case may be. Does the class mean gentlemen of abundant private means? does it mean professional men? does it mean tradesmen? does it mean loafers, or paupers, or mechanics or criminals? The term is equally applicable to all these, but in no instance can it be properly considered applicable to those of whom it is used. If the Assistant Clerks are gentlemen possessed of private resources, as some of them are, the term applied to them means that, though engaged for a lifetime in the public service, their labours are not to be paid for, but the country is to “sponge” on their personal property, and make them work on philanthropic principles, because, according to the views of Mr. Childers, although the richest country in the world, it cannot afford to pay for the necessaries of life to those who serve in the various departments of the State—in reality, the more correct explanation being that, those in authority so squander the national revenue that there is not enough left to be commonly honest with. If the Assistant Clerks come from the ranks of men connected with the professions or with trade, though these provide for their old age with surplus earnings, or by building up a business that will go on when they are beyond work, they cannot follow their example, because far from having surplus earnings, they have deplorably insufficient ones, and their built-up business, so to speak, through long years, the Government persistently denies the existence of, because it desires to appropriate it on the quiet (*vide* Lowe). There is a class of society best described as “loafers,” they being parasitic creatures of mean-spirited dispositions, who would be most willing to provide for their old age, or their middle age either, at any one else’s expense, no matter whose. Perhaps Mr. Childers thinks that the Assistant Clerks in the Civil Service belong to this denomination, though if he does, it is probable that “the wish is father to the thought,” because if they are loafers, it is not because they do not industriously earn a livelihood, but because, though earning it, their remuneration is withheld, that by demoralizing them to the extent of driving them to loaf upon others, the cost of their sustenance may not appear in the Exchequer accounts. Then, there are the regular “paupers,” a class to provide for whom heavy local rates are levied, they having no other means of getting a living—a class, doubtless, that includes our friend whose portrait is sketched on the cover, and who, not having been pensioned at the end of thirty years’ service because he had not bargained for it

before he began, and having, "unfortunately, been accustomed to make no provision for his old age," as he had nothing to make it with, has naturally drifted into that mode of terminating his earthly career. The mechanic class, in some cases, make a certain kind of provision for the future, by small sums put by into friendly societies or clubs, but their circumstances are not at all analogous to that of Civil Service clerks. Their position in life, their tastes, inclinations and social requirements are widely different, and they are far from being entirely self-supporting. A man who is regarded and recognised as being a workman is open to receipt of assistance in a variety of ways, assistance that he not only thinks it no indignity to accept, but looks for as a right, and he often gets paid much in excess of what Government Assistant Clerks do. One of these being under the necessity of availing himself of the services of a mechanic, would probably have to pay him half as much again for his day's work as he himself received. Lastly, there is the criminal mode of providing for old age, a mode adopted by Mr. Fagin and others, for the details of whose pursuits the reader is referred to governors of gaols, and the pages of the *Newgate Calendar*. While Mr. Childers is emphatically opposed to providing anything in the nature of superannuation for those whose needs are greatest, he has advocated giving them, when dismissed, a certain (or uncertain) sum of money as a gratuity—his idea probably being that they are so extremely childish that a lump sum, however inadequate for the purpose for which it is supposed to be given, would so dazzle their eyes that they would go away contentedly, and only find out their mistake when it was too late to rectify it. The proposal can be taken for what it is worth; as, though made about ten years ago, it has never been put into force or sanctioned, during the whole succeeding period.

Now, for the kaleidoscope! What is his scheming for? Simply this: there is an enormous list of large pensions paid to men who do nothing for them, and who have already received large payment for, oftentimes, very questionable services. If the Assistant Clerks' names appear on this Pension List, it will grow to such a length as to arouse public attention, and influence political life, and there is not much doubt as to which pensions the public would in that case be most desirous to see dispensed with. The object, therefore, to be borne in mind is to keep down the *length* as much as possible, so that an expansive *breadth* may be enjoyed without the same risk of discovery and interference. Mr. Childers himself fully

acts up to his avowed principles. His own name is the only one of the Ministry down upon the list, and this is for the sum of £1,133 a year, his pay when in office being £5,000. The length of his official service is somewhere about a quarter of thirty years, and the quality is of about the same stamp as the quantity. It would be easy to enlarge on his shortcomings, while any services from him of a high character are unknown. The remarks quoted are sufficient in themselves to exhibit that lack of capacity which is equally conspicuous in other things; and it was while pondering over his silly ideas about the providing for their old age in other ways by those whom he was anxious to prevent having even a sufficiency for their daily present needs, that the writer's mind ran over some of the "other ways" that they might be supposed to adopt. Sketches of these will be found on the following pages. The first one is intended specially to illustrate the noble principle of keeping on a man till he is no longer any good—say, till his sight is defective—and then unceremoniously despatching him, unpaid for the past, and unprovided for, for the future. The other sketches require no explanation.

A few words in conclusion to the "Tails" in the Civil Service themselves, so much having been said *about* them and about the treatment to which they are subjected by the "Heads." DO NOT GIVE WAY EITHER TO DESPAIR OR TO DYNAMITE. Undoubtedly, a settlement of this question could be precipitated by an appeal to force; and under the circumstances a very little of it would go a long way. Only so recently as the 23rd of last June, appeared one more statement on the hackneyed subject of the influence of the Clerkenwell outrage about twenty years since, on Mr. Gladstone's legislation. Mr. Gladstone's views on such events might perhaps be not unfairly described thus: "If no actual wrong exists, outrages will be unavailing to attain desired objects; but if wrongs do exist that require removal, and those who should remove them are indifferent, outrages may serve the purpose of arresting their attention and stimulating them to the discharge of their duty." This principle being admitted, its application to your circumstances, O ye Tails! is very easy. The wrongs under which you have suffered for years past are perfectly notorious, and, as has been already pointed out, there can be found no kind of excuse for them, even in official quarters. Not only so, but there is abundant evidence that those who are really your worst enemies are fully conscious how hopeless it is to attempt to perpetuate those wrongs for

more than a limited period, unless secrecy can be maintained. Hence, if justification or excuse on the above ground were wanted for outrage at your hands, it is to be found in abundance in official documents; *but this circumstance at the same time indicates its needlessness.* You have only to gain publicity, and by carrying on a *judicious* agitation your cause will assuredly be won. There are various means of doing so, which it is not necessary here to explain in detail; this book advocates your claims with force, and probably supplies you with more argument and fact in a small space than can be found elsewhere. It seems to the Author of it that you would do well, not only every one of you to procure a copy of it for himself, but, as your circumstances admit of it, to send copies to your friends throughout the country, and induce them, north and south, and east and west, to bring it before Members of Parliament, and ask them to withhold their votes from those who will not pledge themselves to press the matter upon the attention of the Government till the evils are swept away, and a just and satisfactory policy substituted in their place. The Author would be glad to know to what extent the views herein stated meet your approbation, and to what extent you have become purchasers of the book. To that end he would be glad to receive from the "Tails" in each London Department, a letter stating how many of them there are in such Department, how long, on the average, they have been in the Service, and how many copies they have *themselves* procured, as by this he can form a definite opinion as to whether they are sufficiently alive to their own interests as he views them, for it to be worth his while to consider them further. He judges it not too much for him to expect that if the "Tails" approve of and value this effort on their behalf they will determine that there shall be no risk of his being money out of pocket in consequence, even if the time and labour devoted to it bring no return—the latter experience one which they understand so well—and to that end that they will, at as early a date as is convenient, buy up the first edition. If this should be done, and the sale further stimulated elsewhere, so as distinctly to arouse public interest, there is a great deal in the background which can be brought forward, the difficulty being out of such exuberance of material to know what to select; but the effort and the expense involved cannot be continued, if those to whose interests they are devoted are too little in accord with the writer, for them to care to do more than spend a quarter



of an hour over a borrowed copy, and then lay it aside to be forgotten.

The Author firmly believes that without any appeals to force, it is fully within the power of the Assistant Clerks to obtain proper terms from the Government—terms that shall not only provide for the future, but shall pay for the past—if only they put their shoulder to the wheel, and quit themselves like men; to this course he urges them, though, till he has an opportunity of forming some opinion as to how far what he has already written is received, he abstains from going further into the matter—contenting himself with the exhortation to them to appropriate and to adapt to their own circumstances the war-song of the GRAND OLD MAN in the encounter which, with the exception of the pulling down of the railings, immediately preceded the passing of the Reform Act of 1867. “Time is on our side; all the social forces are arrayed against our opponents; and though for a while the banner which we carry may droop over our sinking heads, it shall be carried, ere long, in the sight of Heaven, and in the sight of Great Britain, by the firm hands of the Assistant Clerks in all the Government offices, to a certain and a not-far-distant victory.”

#### THE END.

\* \* In accordance with various of the foregoing remarks, especially the “*Note*” on the opening page, it was at first intended to *publish* this book in the ordinary course; on second considerations, however, the writer has determined to defer doing so till he has had an opportunity of observing the reception it meets with from those whom it immediately concerns, and who can have a copy of it sent to them direct upon their forwarding a postal order for the sum of one shilling and sixpence and an addressed and stamped (1½d.) label for pasting on, to “R. S. R., care of Mr. Gaultier, 17, Paternoster Square, E.C.”





*I Think the Government could part with a man after 30 years' service without any superannuation. I would give him "a liberal gratuity if he came from the class who are accustomed to provide for their old age in other ways"*

*R<sup>T</sup> HON. H. C. E. CHILDERS.*





*ECHO— "In other ways."*

*One of them.*





*Another of them.*

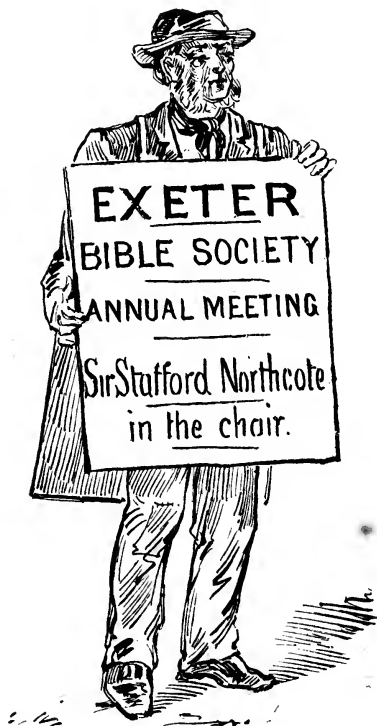






And yet another-  
"Clo', any old clo'."

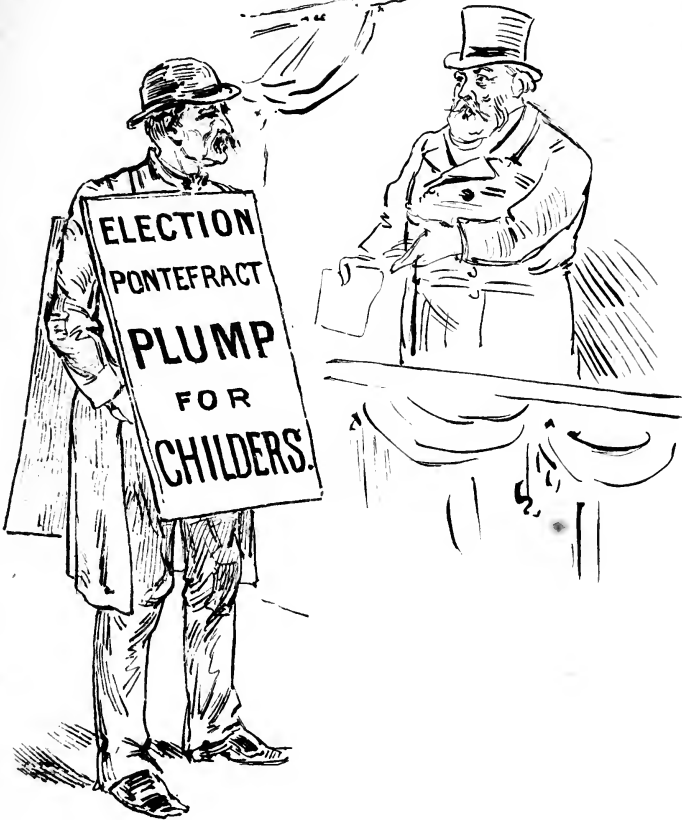




*And one more.*

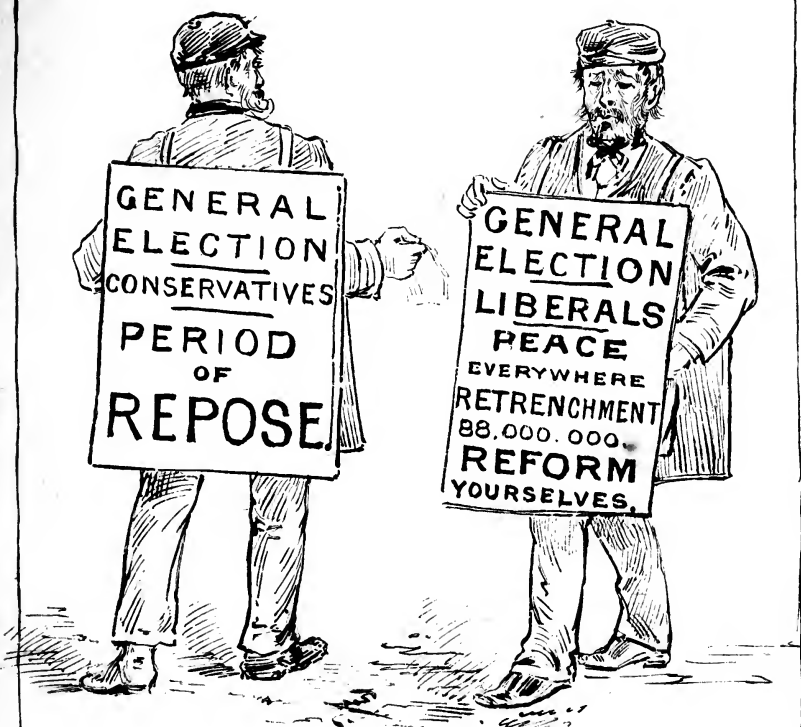
*Pharaoh (to deputation of Israelites touching supply of straw.) "That's all you're wanted for"!!!*





*And a Sixth.*





*And a seventh.*







*And an eighth*





*"It is unfortunately the case that persons of some classes of life do not—are not accustomed to make provision for old age;*

*with others it is the custom to do so, and the facilities for it are now very great."*

*RT. HON. H.C.E. CHILDERS.*



## CLOAK ROOM



## LAST SCENE OF ALL

*That ends this strange eventful history :*

*Sans salary, sans savings, sans pension, sans wife,  
Sans child, sans hope sans fear, sans obligation,  
Sans remorse !!!*

*"LEST, WHEN OUR LATEST HOPE IS FLED, YE TASTE OF OUR  
 AND LEARN AT LENGTH IN SOME DARK HOUR, HOW MUCH THE <sup>DESPAIR,</sup>  
 WRETCHED DARE."*











